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As the Witch Hunters Open Up on Newspaper Business

The *New York Times* Knuckles Under

The long threatened investigation of "subversives" in the newspaper business is opening this week in New York City. Its main target is America's greatest newspaper, the *New York Times,* which earned the hatred of the witch hunters by opposing McCarthy and McCarthyism. It is painful to report that the *Times,* despite all it has said on the subject [see the excerpts on this and the next page], has surrendered to the witch hunt. It is urging employes subpoenaed by Senator Eastland and the Senate Internal Security Committee to "cooperate" and it has already discharged one employe, and forced the resignation of another, for refusing to do so.

Some 70 subpoenas have been served on newspaper workers in New York, about 30 of them on the *New York Times.* The management of the *Times* has helped serve the subpoenas. Those singled out by the committee have been summoned one by one from work by the personnel department, and ushered into a conference room where the subpoenas were served upon them. Rarely have fundamental principles been surrendered so sedately. If we published pictures *Time* magazine style, we'd have to caption Arthur Hays Sulzberger at this point, "No Zenger He."

The procedure at the *Times* has been first to help serve the subpoena and then to bring pressure on the unlucky employe to talk. Soon after receiving the subpoena, the victim has been called in for an interview by Louis Loeb, counsel for the *New York Times.* Loeb has been telling these employes that the Eastland committee has several hundred names of newspaper and radio people to be called, and he has made it clear that those on the *Times* who invoke the Fifth amendment will be fired, with all the attendant damaging publicity that entails.

One employe who ranked high enough to be of non-Newspaper Guild status resigned under threat of discharge. A second told Loeb in confidence that he had been a Communist some years before and would take the Fifth rather than be forced to name others. It was suggested that he resign and when he did not do so, he was first suspended and then discharged. When his lawyer asked the cause of discharge, he was told that if the employe insisted that the Newspaper Guild be told the cause, the *New York Times* would consider itself released from its pledge of confidence. Such are the rewards of candor.

It was suggested by Loeb to another employe that if he did not want to testify publicly against others, he should go to the FBI and tell them all he knows. Then when called by the committee he could testify about himself but refuse to name others on the ground that he had already told all to the FBI, and take his chances on that. Loeb said he was making this suggestion as an individual and not as counsel for the *New York Times* but thought the paper would probably support that kind of a position. Similar conversations have led some others to decide that their best course would be to name a few names, but confine themselves to persons dead or already well known as Communists.

The number of actual Communists present or past in the newspaper business, as elsewhere, is vastly exaggerated. It is no surprise to find among the privately circulating lists of those subpoened at the *New York Times,* the names of persons never known to engage in political activity of any kind, except —significantly—within the Newspaper Guild itself. The lists seem to have been compiled in no small part from persons who were active in the Guild, though all kinds of other odd choices have been included, among them several printers. Perhaps some subversive typographical errors have been uncovered.

Other subpoenas—among those known—have been served at the *New York Post,* Hearst's *Mirror* and the *Daily News* in

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"Informing for The Sake of Advantage"

"A Code of Conduct for American servicemen . . . should be applicable to civilians no less than to soldiers. . . . It expresses a national duty and obligation that are implicit in the life of the soldier and should be implicit in the life of the civilian. The report and the code alike put stress, also, on the obligation not to betray or harm one's fellows. This is less a matter of patriotism than of ethics and good morals. It is noteworthy that in the adverse report upon the behavior of some prisoners the question of 'ratting'—or informing for the sake of advantage—is the decisive factor in some cases. That accords with the best code of conduct, civilian as well as military."

—New York Times editorial, Aug. 19, 1955.

"We Shall Not Miss . . . The Cowardly"

"If it is wrong to refuse to testify against one's self, is it also wrong to object to unlawful search and seizure . . . to the abridgment of freedom of the press and of speech? To ask such questions is to answer them. . . . It is time for us to reaffirm our faith in the whole Bill of Rights—the Fifth amendment included—without favor and without fear. We shall be stronger when we do so. We shall not miss the weak, the cowardly and the vicious who will fall out of the ranks."

—New York Times editorial, Feb. 21, 1955.

"I have learned to my regret that at your appearance today before the Senate Internal Security Sub-committee you refused to answer questions put to you in connection with your alleged association with the Communist Party."

—Letter of discharge from Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of the New York Times to Melvin Barnet, July 13, 1955.

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A Cowed Press Can Be The Only Result of Permitting A Hunt for "Subversives"

No Firm Defense Possible Short of the First Amendment

(*Continued from Page One*)

the daily field while the *National Guardian* is again a target among the weeklies. McCarthy two and a half years ago started out with the *Guardian,* summoning its editor Cedric Belfrage and its executive editor, James Aronson. Belfrage has since been deported to his native Britain on the usual trumpery with hardly a murmur of protest in newspaper business. This time subpoenas have been served on Aronson and on John T. McManus, the *Guardian's* general manager. The strategy may be indicated by the fact that Aronson was formerly on the *New York Times* and McManus was for five years president of the New York Newspaper Guild.

In the New York newspaper field, honorable salute is due the *New York Post* and its editor, James Wechsler, who was also one of McCarthy's targets. In an editorial on October 2,

"The Erosion of Our Own Freedom"

". . . the Fifth amendment is an important and historic element in the charter of our liberties; and if it is to protect the best of us it must also stand ready to be used even by the worst. The erosion of our own freedom begins when we deprive of its guarantees those whom we most hate and despise."

—New York Times editorial, "Not Excluding The Fifth," May 25, 1955.

the *Post* took the *Times* to task for dismissing Melvin Barnet, a copy-reader who invoked the Fifth before the Eastland committee last July in the curtain-raiser for these new hearings. The *Post* also criticized the grievance committee of the Guild at the *Times* for voting against Barnet—a remarkable piece of something worse than company unionism—and concluding that "every loyal American" is under obligation to tell all he knows to Congressional witch hunters. This ignominious position was also supported by a majority vote of the *Times* unit and is being cited by the *Times* in its pending action against the Guild for an order to enjoin arbitration of the Barnet discharge. Thus the *Times* and its Guild unit in their own respective ways illustrate the collapse of principle under panic.

"Nobody's Business But His Own"

"Chief Justice Warren's decision . . . reaffirms individual rights when it strikes down the arrogated authority of an executive agency to penalize an individual for . . . associations which were within his discretion as a citizen and thoughts which were nobody's business but his own.

"The Peters case does not merely vindicate one man. It arose from an effort, with which surely most Americans must sympathize, to vindicate the dignity of the individual citizen against the usurpations of governmental agencies, the mendacity of secret informers and the passing hysteria of some sections of public opinion."

—New York Times editorial, June 8, 1955.

The principle seems to us clear. The First Amendment forbids Congress to abridge the freedom of the press. That freedom may not be abridged even indirectly, as the Supreme Court held when it threw out Huey Long's famous punitive tax on newspaper advertising. The most effective way to abridge freedom of the press would be to do to newspapers what has already been done by the Congressional witch hunters to other businesses and professions. That is to frighten the daylights out of publishers and newspapermen by subjecting them to political inquisition, and thus putting them on notice that they may be smeared and destroyed if they do not conform to the standards of the McCarthies, McCarrans and Eastlands. Their purpose is to make it as dangerous as possible to oppose them. This is why the *Times,* which has spoken out against the witch hunt in a truly conservative and independent spirit, was marked long ago for smear; McCarthy had Matusow all primed for it.

Against this attack we see only one firm line of defense, and that is the First amendment itself. Congress has no right to interrogate newspapermen on their political ideas or associations. To put Communists and other "subversives" (whatever that means) in a special class is to lose the battle at the very start, by throwing editorial rooms wide open for ideological examination in which any deviation from a cowed standpattism becomes suspect.

But He Fired Barnet, Who Left the Party Six Years Earlier, in 1942

The Speech in Which Sulzberger Proposed An Amnesty for Former (Pre-1948) Communists

"As I see it you must have the courage to condemn a new form of lynch law which has become too prevalent in our land—you must have the courage to stand up and be counted even when the crowd is hell-bent on burning a witch. . . . Some of us have become alarmed and evidence our fears in ways destructive to our system of government. These frightened people are the ones who tear to shreds the fabric of our democracy in the hope of disclosing a Communist hiding within its folds. . . . I am not prepared to cast guilt and suspicion upon my trusted associates and in so doing destroy the atmosphere of confidence which is necessary to produce the kind of newspaper that we do. . . .

"Taking that date [1948] then, I would declare the equivalent of a sort of moratorium or some sort of political amnesty: Anyone who joined a Communist front organization thereafter must accept whatever consequences might befall him as a result of that association. On the other hand, he who joined such an organization prior to that date should not be regarded as necessarily and automatically having a black mark on his record, provided he has clearly disassociated himself from any such group before the date set. . . .

"I am not talking about the indisputable right to question a man's judgment, but about the popular tendency to doubt a man's present motives because of his past associations. I am concerned with trying to preserve the redemptive principle in our society, for that society is based on the theory of redemption, on the idea of forgiveness even for past crimes.

"Thus we have a statute of limitations which protects a man from being brought to trial for certain offenses after a number of years. The reasoning behind this is that over a period of time the perspective changes, accurate testimony is hard and sometimes impossible to gather because memory fades, and it is difficult to judge a man in the atmosphere of one generation for things said and done in another."

—Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher, the New York Times, speech accepting honorary degree at John Carroll University, June 15, 1953 (full text in his paper next day).

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The Numbed Silence That Greeted Krushchev's H-Bomb Announcement

Independents Want Eisenhower Again, But Not With Nixon

The President's recovery is good news for all who want peace and we hope he will run again, but if Nixon is to be on the ticket with him for Vice President many independents will regretfully feel that a vote for Eisenhower is too hazardous. . . . Were Nixon to reach the White House, with Dulles in the State Department and their friend Knowland party leader in the Senate, the outlook for peace would be bleak indeed. . . . The balance of forces within the Republican party is too precarious to gamble on Nixon. . . . He will make votes for the Democrats. . . .

A Numb Silence

All over India the Soviet leaders have been greeted with cheers. But a British newspaperman, William Stvenson, who covered the speech in Bangalore at which Krushchev announced the Russian hydrogen bomb explosion, reported "a numb silence" (London *Sunday Times*, Nov. 27) at the news. Krushchev ended by raising his arms and crying "India, Russia, Bhai, Bhai" (long life) which on all previous occasions had drawn loud applause "but this time there was none, and Krushchev sat down, blinking in evident puzzlement." . . . It would seem that the Indian masses are as appalled by Russian, as by American, H-bombs, and this may explain why a few days later Moscow repeated its offer of last May 10 to discontinue atomic tests if the West did, too. . . . A moratorium on further tests was first suggested by Nehru.

Short of Telepathy

When Mr. Dulles was asked about the Soviet offer at press conference last week, he made a characteristically vague and ambiguous answer. He said that as yet no formula for an agreement had been found which was "both dependable and in the interests of the United States." . . . A dependable agreement would seem to be easy. We detected the latest Soviet explosion as we have its predecessors, and announced it three days before Krushchev did. We could hardly do better than that unless we had long distance telepathic mind-readers which enabled us to know what the Soviet leaders were going to do before they did it. . . . An agreement for no more tests would be self-enforcing, since such tests cannot be kept secret. . . . But it is well to remember that the same winds which carry the news also carry the fresh poisons thus let loose. . . . Is it in our interest to let this mutual poisoning of the atmosphere go on? . . . Dulles dodges this by saying "I refer not only to our national interest, but the interest that we have in protecting peace and freedom in the world." . . . Presumably this refers to deterrence-by-terror. . . . But Mr. Dulles seems to forget that we no longer have a monopoly; there is now a stalemate. . . . It could be that "peace and freedom" are a little over-protected, perhaps almost endangered by our highly advertised trigger-tense ready-to-go bombers. . . . We believe it to be the moral duty of the atomic scientists to evaluate the Secretary of State's answer and open a national debate on the question. . . .

Question of the Week

How many Negroes have to be shot in Mississippi before the conscience of this white man's country is sufficiently moved to enforce the law?

No Army for East Germany

The American press seems to have ignored the most striking aspect of the reshuffle in the East German government. "Contrary to expectation," the Berlin correspondent of the London Sunday *Observer* reported (Nov. 27), "no Ministry of Defense has been created. This corresponds to a recent dying down of military propaganda. It seems now certain that East Germany will not, for the time being, raise its police forces officially to the rank of an army, or enter an armaments race with West Germany." The *Observer* correspondent speculates that this may be due (1) to the slow beginnings of West German rearmament, or (2) to objections from within the Soviet bloc, especially Poland but (3) "it seems chiefly to indicate that the Soviet Union still expects some progress of the disarmament talks with the West, including a possible agreement on limitation of East West forces."

Footnote It Is Dangerous to Ignore

In this connection, we note (in trying to read the West German papers lately) that even the responsible writers refer to East Germany as "Mitteldeutschland." What we call the East Zone is for them only "middle Germany." Eastern Germany is presumably the old territory now occupied by Poland and (East Prussia) the Soviet Union. This means that for Germans the Reich will not really be reunited again until Poland has once more been dismembered and Russia (by force or secret deal) gives up the old eastern territories. Thus peaceful reunion of West and "Middle" Germany would only be the prelude to a new period of tension, threat and secret maneuver.

What Molotov Told Charlie Wilson About His Youth in the Czar's Salt Mines

Few newspapers reported what Defense Secretary Wilson told the press on his return from Geneva about his talk with Molotov. It was crowded out of our last week's issue but we think it worth recording verbatim because it shows that Mr. Wilson treated Geneva as an exercise in understanding and not an occasion for inflammatory self-righteousness. Mr. Wilson had just been asked by the Chicago Tribune reporter at the Pentagon whether the cold war was being resumed and whether it had ever stopped. The Secretary said it had not stopped, there was "tension" before and it still existed—and then he went on to tell this story:

"I had an interesting experience," the Secretary said, "after one of the dinners with Mr. Molotov. We were sitting having coffee after the dinner and I was talking to him through an interpreter, Mr. Troyanovsky. As a matter of fact, I knew his father, who was the first Russian Ambassador to this country. He came to Detroit with some other Russians and their wives to pay me a visit and I think it was in '34.

"I had mentioned that previously, and also the day in the conference Foster Dulles had happened to mention that he had been present at Versailles and he had been watching these things for a long, long time. So there was discussion about how long the various people that were there had been in government. Obviously I was junior to the whole outfit.

"But Mr. Molotov said 'Do I get credit for the time I worked in the salt mines?' He said 'You know, the Czar put me in the salt mines when I was 19 years old, and do I get credit for working for the government over that period?'

"Now I make that point because it was very clear that the comparisons the Russians are making are really basically between what they have achieved, what their present type of society and what they had under the Czars, and certainly for an old timer like him it was very clear that that was still in his mind, and they don't quite realize the great difference between our form of capitalist society, our free American approach to the whole problem, and they lump that with the same thing they had under the Czars, which is not so at all. And I am sure the Russian people themselves and the people of our country have much more in common than you would think from our two types of government."

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Why Pay Millions to the Rich Farmer In Order to Dribble A Few Dollars to the Poor?

A Fruitful New Idea in Farm Relief: "Graduate" It Like the Income Tax

Since New Deal days, farm aid programs have poured out millions to rich farmers in order to dribble out a few dollars to the poor. Last Tuesday night at Council Bluffs, Iowa, Senator W. Scott Kerr, Democrat, of North Carolina, proposed a fruitful new idea. Just as we graduate the income tax, in order to collect more at the top and less at the bottom, so Senator Scott would have us graduate the price support program to give more relief at the bottom, less at the top. This makes much better sense than Democratic demagogy about 90 percent of parity, and the new soil bank program promised by the Republicans. Under either program, rich famers who don't need it will cash in heavily.

The effect of giving the same price supports to big farmer as well as small was graphically painted by Senator Scott. He said that in 1954 the five largest price support loans on corn in Iowa averaged $75,446 each. This means that the five biggest Iowa corn growers in effect unloaded their surplus corn on the government that year at an average of $75,000 apiece. The average of all corn loans in Iowa during that year was only $1,909.

Senator Scott provided similar figures on Kansas wheat growers. In 1954 the five largest price support loans on wheat in Kansas averaged $71,506—but the average of all wheat loans that same year averaged only $1,759. The Senator said loans on other farm commodities showed about the same picture and added, "From these figures," Senator Scott said, "you can see who is mainly responsible for the continuing growth of our surplus farm stocks." The big farmers, who can take care of themselves, produce most of the surpluses and get most of the farm relief.

One Farmer Got A $1,250,000 Dole

The big farmer dominates our agriculture. In wheat, farmers who planted 100 acres or more made up less than 11 percent of the total number of wheat farmers but accounted for almost 42 percent of wheat production. About 8 percent of the cotton growers accounted for 45 percent of all cotton produced. In 1954 one of these big farm operators received a "support loan" of $1,250,000. Why should these big business farmers be subsidized?

Senator Scott proposes that a farmer marketing up to 1,000 bushels of wheat receive price supports at 100 percent of parity. On the next 500 bushels the government would allow 95 percent of parity and on the following 500 only 90 percent of parity. This would be further graduated downward so that a big farmer would get only 60 percent of parity on all wheat produced over 4,500 bushels.

In the case of cotton, Senator Scott would allow 100 percent of parity on the first 15 bales and 95 percent on the next 15 bales. This would be graduated downward so that any cotton produced in excess of 500 bales would get support only at 60 percent.

A "General Motorized" Agriculture

The effect would be to give the smallest farmers support at 100 percent of parity, more than they get now, and to lower the support for the largest farmers to 60 percent. "Under the adjusted price support system," Senator Scott said, "the larger the farmer the less support he gets from his government." The present support system, the Senator said, threatens to turn this into a nation of plantations and corporation farms, and to create a "General Motorized" agriculture.

The rich farmers generally have preferred lower flexible price supports because they can produce more cheaply, and force out the small farmer. The smaller farmer has been forced to agitate for high supports, though this puts millions in the pockets of the big farmer and encourages overproduction on the big farm. "Graduated" farm relief would give high supports to the small farmer, flexible lower supports to the big. Neither party is likely to warm up to Scott's idea; even in the best days of the New Deal, the richer farmers north and south had the most political influence and got by far the biggest helping of government gravy.

A Precious Item Few Papers Carried

Will Wonders Never Cease?

"Norwalk, Conn., Nov. 25 (United Press)—Lt. Gen. Leslie R. Groves, who headed the World War II Manhattan Project that developed the atomic bomb, said today the disclosure that Russia had exploded another nuclear device 'is not particularly pleasant.'

" 'It emphasizes once again that we can't afford a nuclear war,' Groves said. The retired General now is vice-president of the Remington Rand Corp. Groves said the atomic bomb was the first weapon that led men toward the idea that 'war is too terrible' to wage.

" 'We're not the only ones who don't want war,' he said. 'Russian leaders don't want one, either.' "

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